

CONFIDENTIAL.]

[No. 52 of 1902.

REPORT (PART II)
ON
NATIVE-OWNED ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS IN BENGAL
FOR THE
Week ending Saturday, 27th December 1902.

C O N T E N T S .

	PAGE.		PAGE.
I.—FOREIGN POLITICS.		(g)—Railways and Communications, including Canals and Irrigation—	
Nil.		Nil.	
II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.		(h)—General—	
(a)—Police—		The proximity to Cantonment limits considered dangerous ... 610	
Nil.		The Chief Justice and the Bengal Government ... ib.	
(b)—Working of the Courts—		"Fear of the native press" ... ib.	
The Criminal Bench of the High Court ... 609		Survey and Settlement systems ... ib.	
The Calcutta High Court ... ib.		The Administration of Bengal ... 611	
The High Court and the Coronation holidays ... ib.		Lord Curzon and the Native Press ... ib.	
(c)—Jails—		The inoculation accident in the Punjab ... ib.	
Nil.		Subscriptions for the Woodburn Memorial Fund ... ib.	
(d)—Education—		The Office of the Superintendent of Stamps and Stationery ... ib.	
Nil.		III.—LEGISLATION.	
(e)—Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration—		Nil.	
The Calcutta Municipality and the native quarter ... 609		IV.—NATIVE STATES.	
(f)—Questions affecting the Land—		The Berars ... 611	
Nil.		Ditto ... 612	
		"Is it levelling up or levelling down?" ... ib.	
		V.—PROSPECTS OF THE CROPS AND CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.	
		Nil.	
		VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.	
		The late Sir John Woodburn ... 612	

II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.

(b)—Working of the Courts.

1728. The *Bengalee* takes up the matter recently discussed by the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, of the manner in which the present Criminal Bench of the High Court is discharging the rules issued by its predecessors, and considers that it is imperatively necessary that the Chief Justice should at once look into the matter. The present state of things will lend to loss of popular confidence in the High Court

BENGALUR,
20th Dec. 1902.

1729. The *Bengalee* expresses the opinion that the arrears as well as the scandalous delay in the administration of justice in the Calcutta High Court are the result of the long vacation enjoyed by the Judges.

BENGALUR,
20th Dec. 1902.

"The year which is composed of 300 days, excluding legitimate holidays, in the case of the highest officers of the State, including the Viceroy, the Heads of Administrations, their Secretaries, the Heads of the gigantic concerns like the railway, the Post office, the Telegraph Departments, etc., who exercise their brains in no smaller degree than the Judges, dwindles down to about 220 days in their case. The work which is thus performed by 13 Judges could be performed, without unduly taxing their working-capacity, by less than 10 Judges. It accordingly follows that if the holidays could be curtailed to their legitimate proportions, three Judges could be available for working off the arrears and for the speedier administration of justice, and the arrangement, moreover, would dispense altogether with the necessity of further strengthening the Court at an enormous cost"

It recommends that the Government should face the unpopularity of a searching enquiry into the machinery and establishment of the High Court, which has been deliberately shirked.

1730. The *Hindoo Patriot* says:—"While all other Government offices are to enjoy a long spell of Coronation holidays, the High Court of Bengal and the Courts under it have to do without them. While this is done, three of the invited Judges, including the Chief Justice, go to Delhi, and will be there while their Courts are open. This would tend to remind one of the country *Daladalees* in the course of which the children of the house are forbidden the enjoyment of the sweet things prepared in the house of the opposite party, while the *Kurta* goes and 'keeps the invitation' as the guest, which saves the situation and 'the face.'"

HINDOO PATRIOT,
23rd Dec. 1902.

The High Court and the Coronation holidays.

(c)—Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.

1731. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* invites His Excellency the Viceroy to visit the native quarter of Calcutta *incognito* and see for himself the manner in which the Municipality is doing its work. The citizens of that locality cannot thank His Excellency for having deprived them of Local Self-Government which they have enjoyed so many years.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
22nd Dec. 1902.

The Calcutta Municipality and the native quarter.

(h)—General.

1732. The *Weekly Chronicle* (Assam) gives the following instance to show how the proximity of a Cantonment jurisdiction is fraught with danger to defenceless and law-abiding natives:—

WEEKLY CHRONICLE,
16th Dec. 1902.

The proximity to Cantonment limits considered dangerous.

"The Cantonment Magistrate of Silchar, Lieutenant Forbes, lately took it into his head to over-awe a house-owner, Ram Prasad Pande, within the cantonment limits, into acquiescence with the terms offered by the Cantonment authorities in respect of certain houses, and went the length of keeping in unlawful custody the son and agent of the aforesaid Ram Prasad, in order that they might fall in with preconcerted plans, and of fining Ram Prasad Rs. 15 for failing to attend before the Magistrate."

The fine, however, was remitted by the Deputy Commissioner on appeal. The *Chronicle* directs the attention of the Chief Commissioner to the case as illustrating a type of misrule of which it is by no means a solitary instance in Assam.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
20th Dec. 1902.

1733. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* reverts to the declaration of the Chief Justice that Sir John Woodburn never sought to influence the independence of the High Court, and cites the case of Mr. Lee, the District and Sessions Judge of Rajshahi, against whom it is alleged the Bengal Government gathered accusations, and requested the High Court to punish him, as it had successfully done as regards Mr. Pennell.

"So," says the journal, "the allegation that the Government of Bengal under Sir J. Woodburn never sought to influence the High Court is not strictly correct."

BENGALER,
20th Dec. 1902.

1734. The *Bengalee* ridicules the idea expressed by Major Rasch, M.P., that the action of His Majesty's Government in supporting Lord Curzon in the matter of the punishment of the IXth Lancers, was due to "fear of the Native Press." But for the action of the Government of India and the interested agitation which followed in the English and Anglo-Indian Press, the Native Press would have for ever remained in the dark as regards the Sialkot tragedy.

"We firmly believe that the Government was forced to adopt a desperate remedy to cure a disease which had threatened to prove desperate, and we also believe that it is not every Viceroy who would have had the courage to do what Lord Curzon has done, even at the risk of incurring much undeserved obloquy at home. It was his firmness which compelled Lord George Hamilton to put on a bold front and defy the agitators. The people of India will never forget how Lord Curzon has risen superior to all narrow considerations in dealing with this singularly delicate question."

BEHAR HERALD,
20th Dec. 1902.

1735. The *Behar Herald* holds that no serious attempt has ever been made to estimate the yearly produce of the soil of India on any sound principle, and that the various Survey and Settlement Departments to which the assessment of the land revenue is entrusted in the different provinces vie with each other in proceeding on rules least adapted to secure such result. In fact, they usually assess the land by an elaborate system of guess-work as to its produce value. Under former Indian systems, and even under the older British Settlements, the cultivators themselves and the village authorities were questioned as to the productive powers of the land; but in some of the recent settlements which have resulted in very large enhancements, this practice has been abandoned. The Settlement Officer knows nothing whatever regarding the actual producing power of the soil, but merely applies all round a series of mechanical rules which are the derision of every cultivator who understands them. The present system leaves the whole question of the assessment to the mere direction of Settlement Officers who do not know the real amount of produce of the fields. Its defects have been admitted over and over again, but as under it large revenues are secured, no remedy is applied. The Secretary of State's ruling of 1864 on this point has, as admitted by Sir Bartle Frere, become "a mere paper instruction."

INDIAN NATION,
22nd Dec. 1902.

1736. The *Indian Nation* advocates the conversion of the Lieutenant-Governorship of Bengal into a Governorship, and urges the following reasons in support thereof:—

"In point of area it stands second; and in respect of population it stands first among the provinces of the Empire; and both in area and population it is nearly double that of France. But while Madras and Bombay are each ruled by a Governor, Bengal, by no means inferior to any of those Presidencies in any respect by which the comparative importance of provinces is gauged, is ruled by a Lieutenant-Governor. It is by no means implied that the affairs of Bengal are such that they cannot be managed and administered by a Lieutenant-Governor. All that is meant is that its affairs would be better managed and administered if it were governed by a ruler untrammelled by the influence of the Anglo-Indian community and the prejudices of the Civil Service. Proofs are not wanting that several Lieutenant-Governors of Bengal even

with the best of intentions were mere wax in the hands of their white brethren, official and non-official."

1737. The unkindest of the cuts inflicted on Lord Curzon's reputation by some of the home papers with reference to his action in regard to the 9th Lancers is, says the *Indian Nation*, that he gave in to the clamours of the Native Press. No body who has watched Lord Curzon's official career can charge him with any weakness of that kind. He honours the Native Press no doubt from time to time with notices of their opinions. But he does so merely to answer them. The first dark references to the case of the Lancers appeared in Anglo-Indian papers, and Lord Curzon's decision, though it undoubtedly accorded with native ideas of justice, was not an answer to any native demand, for none had been made.

INDIAN NATION,
22nd Dec. 1902.

1738. The *Indian Nation* is satisfied with the steps taken by the Punjab Government to compensate the families of those who died in the inoculation accident at Mulkowal, but asks:—

INDIAN NATION,
22nd Dec. 1902.

"Is no attempt to be made to fix the responsibility for the act which resulted in the death of so many men? Those men had come forward to submit to an operation not with the object of taking the risk of death, nor consenting to be killed, but with the object of safeguarding themselves against infection. Somehow or other the operation was quickly followed by their death. Is it not the duty of the Government to enquire and find out where the responsibility lay?"

1739. Commenting on the amount of subscriptions raised so far for a memorial to the late Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, the *Indian Nation* says:—

INDIAN NATION
22nd Dec. 1902.

Nearly half a lakh of rupees was subscribed at the meeting, and it has been swelling since. After this who will believe in the poverty of India? We have no money for this or that concern of acknowledged utility. Every summer we hear of a water famine in Bengal from the absence of proper tanks and wells. And the Universities Commission discovered the other day that there were very few educational endowments established by natives. In Calcutta we have practically no endowed school or college. But we are quite rich enough to be lavishly liberal on all kinds of *tamashas* patronised by Government and on the indiscriminate commemoration of officials.

1740. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* understands that the whole of the office of the Superintendent of Stamps and Stationery will remain open on the 29th and 30th December and on the 3rd, 5th and 7th of January. So, instead of 15, the clerks of the Stamp Office are going to have only 10 days' holiday. It hopes the matter will attract the notice of the kind-hearted Viceroy. When the concession has been extended to all Government servants, why should the clerks of a particular office be deprived of it? It is quite true that work will accumulate; but the remedy lies not in making the poor and hard-worked clerks work during a universal holiday, but in employing an additional establishment as a temporary arrangement to clear the arrears off.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
23rd Dec. 1902.

IV.—NATIVE STATES.

1741. The *Indian Mirror* makes the following comments on the treaty concluded by the Nizam of Hyderabad with the British Government, leasing to the latter the

INDIAN MIRROR,
20th Dec. 1902.

The Berars.
Assigned Districts:—

Thus the Nizam has parted with the fairest and largest portion of his patrimony for the money consideration of twenty-five lakhs of rupees a year in perpetuity, but out of which stipulated amount he and his heirs will receive only nine lakhs till about such time as the debts of the State to the British Indian Government are fully liquidated. What must rile the Nizam most in moments of private communion is the loss of his outward splendour. He is to reduce his regular forces and so on. But the loss of prestige is the most serious loss of the present and future rulers of Hyderabad. But, we think, we have said enough on this disagreeable theme for to-day.

HINDOO PATRIOT,
22nd Dec. 1902.

1742. The *Hindoo Patriot* says that the publication of the Treaty with the Nizam of Hyderabad is somewhat inopportune in view of the forthcoming Durbar, when His Highness the Nizam will be needlessly made to look small as having come off the second best in what may be characterised as a long-drawn diplomatic struggle. It was not till Lord Curzon's masterful personality was introduced into the scene that the consummation became possible.

BENGALER,
23rd Dec. 1902.

1748. The *Bengaler* does not approve of the appointment of the Chief of Nahan and Sir Aga Khan as Additional Members of the Supreme Legislative Council. Neither of them can be, correctly speaking, regarded as a representative of the population of British India, though the latter is practically a British subject, and neither of them can be regarded as a popular representative.

"The seats in the Legislative Council are intended for the leaders of public opinion, and not for Ruling Chiefs or semi-Royal personages. Virtually the people have been robbed of two seats by the unprecedented action of the Government of India. We doubt whether the Chiefs of India at all feel themselves honoured by being appointed Members of the Legislative Council which lowers them, so to say, to the level of the ordinary people. It would have been a great thing if Lord Curzon had created them Councillors of the Empire in the sense contemplated by Lord Lytton. But what Lord Lytton meant was very different from what Lord Curzon has done. Indeed, His Excellency's action is sure to be interpreted as a deliberate step in the direction of lowering the status of the Ruling Chiefs of India, and as such we have no hesitation in characterizing it as an administrative blunder, which, it is to be hoped, will not be repeated."

VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

REIS AND RAYAT,
20th Dec. 1902.

1744. The *Reis and Rayat* comments as follows on the alleged responsibility of Sir John Woodburn for the Calcutta Municipal Act:—

"But it cannot be denied that Sir John Woodburn never introduced any harmful measure. The Calcutta Municipal Act with which it has been the fashion to charge Sir John Woodburn, was neither conceived nor forced upon the people by him. It was the creation of his predecessor, who was admittedly a strong ruler with a will, and was sanctioned and amended by the Viceroy himself. Sir John Woodburn's opposition would have been both ill-advised to some extent and useless. His general policy was peace, as evidenced by his plague measures. But for him, it is inconceivable what might have happened in those days of general panic and flight. A man is and claims to be remembered after death for his best acts. It would be ungracious to forget Sir John Woodburn's good acts directly after his death, and littleness to deny him his claims upon the memory of the people. Lord Curzon has justly shown his appreciation of the object of the memorial, and has done due honour to the memory of his Lieutenant. He would be wanting in his duty, if he kept away."

OFFICE OF THE INSPR.-GENERAL
OF POLICE, L. P.,

WRITERS' BUILDINGS,

The 27th December 1902.

H. B. ST. LEGER,

Asst. to the Insp.-General of Police, L. P.

